



# CALIFORNIA MENTOR INITIATIVE

*"California's mentors help to raise the promise, performance and possibilities of our children. A positive role model can make all the difference. You can make that difference. Be a mentor."*

*Governor Gray Davis*

## *For Information Contact*

*Mentor Resource Center  
1700 K Street  
Sacramento  
California  
95814*

*(800) 444-3066 in CA  
(916) 323-6589 outside CA*

*Fax (916) 323-1270*

*Please refer to the  
California Department  
of Alcohol and  
Drug Programs  
Web site for additional  
mentor resources:  
<http://www.adp.state.ca.gov>*

## Background

Structural change in our society, including the breakdown of the traditional family and erosion of neighborhood community support networks, is having devastating effects on our children and youth. While youth struggle with many challenges, four problem areas stand out: alcohol/drug use, teen pregnancy, educational failure, and gangs and violence. The California Mentor Initiative was created to address these challenges. California is committed to mentoring, not as a panacea for youth's problems but as a life-changing strategy for assisting today's at-risk youth to become productive, contributing members of our society.

## California Mentor Initiative Objectives

The desired outcome of the Initiative is to reduce the four major problem areas mentioned above by recruiting and training quality mentors to reach California's at-risk youth. While over the past three years an estimated 209,000 mentors or matches have provided support to California's youth through mentor programs, tens of thousands of youths are still waiting for a mentor. This information is based on survey results provided by local mentor programs to the California Mentor Resource Center.

In our effort to expand existing mentoring services throughout California the protection and safety of youth is of paramount importance.

## Highlights

The CMI, which was initiated in 1995, works in partnership with many community-based organizations such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Communities in Schools, 100 Black Men, and the California Mentor Foundation to provide opportunities for the community and businesses to support mentoring.

The CMI has developed and adopted quality assurance standards for use by participating mentor programs. Free technical assistance is available to any mentor program interested in adopting and implementing these quality assurance standards within their respective programs.

Since the inception of the California Mentor Initiative in June of 1995 the State of California has invested nearly \$53 million in funds to support local mentoring efforts.

- The Department of Community Services and Development has awarded funds to support local mentor collaboratives and programs.
- The Governor's Office of the Secretary of Education has awarded funds to local school districts and communities to mentor children and youth under the California Academic Volunteer and Mentor Service Program. Under this program, mentors will be linked with at-risk children to improve educational outcomes, and life skills.

- The California Youth Authority has allocated funds for the expansion of the “Young Men as Fathers” program into county juvenile halls, ranches and possibly alternative schools in the community.
- The Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs has allocated funds to support local mentoring efforts through California’s alcohol and drug program service system.
- The Ambassador program under the California Conservation Corps (CCC) is training second year corps members to promote mentoring in local communities at seven sites throughout the State. CCC Ambassadors participate in community outreach, promote mentorship and mentorship training opportunities, and recruit and link mentors for local mentor organizations.

*“My mentor is my friend. He is someone I can turn to for help and advice.”*

*Mentee  
CMI Montage Video*

*“This isn’t like giving at the office. It isn’t like putting a donation on MasterCard. It’s really giving, in the old-fashioned sense. I have the joy of seeing—in a youngster’s eyes and achievement—exactly what I have given.”*

*from  
The Power of Mentoring  
One Plus One*

## Mentor Resource Center and Hotline

The Mentor Resource Center (MRC) was created to serve as a library and clearing-house for mentoring materials and provides a database for mentor referrals. The MRC is located at 1700 K Street, Sacramento, 95814, and is available to the public as a single point of contact for mentor program development and information. By calling the MRC Hotline at **1-800-444-3066**, (outside of California call (916) 323-6589) the public may obtain a packet of information including a statewide directory of mentor programs, funding information, and other mentor information. Some of this information is also accessible via the Internet at **<http://calmentor.ca.gov>**.

## Mentoring Facts

Studies are providing data reflecting the powerful impact of a caring adult in a young person’s life. Research shows a 46 percent reduction in the initiation of drug use and a 27 percent reduction in the initiation of alcohol use for young people in a study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs. (Source: “Making A Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters,” Public Private Ventures, 1995) Additional research shows that grades in school improved for 59 percent of students as a result of help from their mentors; 53 percent credited mentors with improving their ability to avoid drugs; 52 percent of students improved their ability to stay out of trouble as a result of their mentoring experience. (Source: “Mentoring: Lessons Learned,” The Commonwealth Fund, Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., 1994)

## Virtual Mentoring Community

Through the combined efforts of several California technology companies a web site, relational database and communication system have been designed to link mentor programs together. The development of these systems will enable mentor programs to track mentor-mentee matches and collect valuable client impact data.